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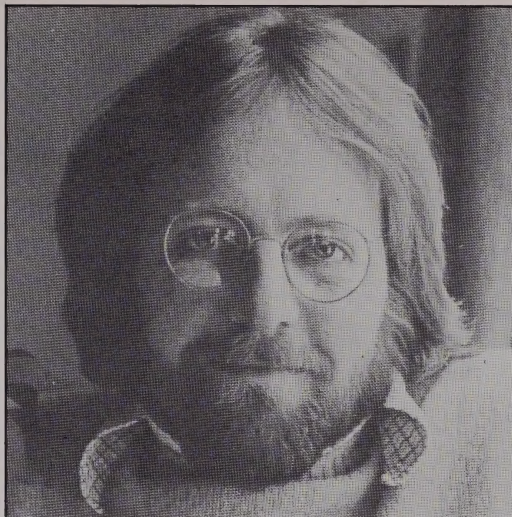
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NOW I BECOME

WRITING BY STUDENTS & TEACHERS
IN THE SCHOOLS OF MONTANA
1984-85

Montana Arts Council
Poets & Writers in Schools/Communities Program

Lewis & Clark Library
120 S. Last Chance Mall
Helena, Montana 59601



David Long

DEDICATION

To those of us close to the Poets & Writers program, David Long is an inseparable presence in it.

When I first joined the Montana Arts Council staff to direct the Artists in Schools programs, David was an “apprentice” poet. He stayed on—as long as anyone has ever been allowed to stay—to become a Master Poet and to assist in orienting new writers to the program. He has served the maximum time possible on the programs’ advisory committee. He has served as a judge for the Council’s First Book Award publication competition. He put together an informative and inspiring slide/sound show about the Artists in Schools/Communities programs. He helped the Council and the Yellowstone Art Center to design the Regional Writers Project (to market books by writers in the Northwest region).

David’s own writing has won national awards and consistent high praise. He is also a good husband, father (to two sons), teacher and friend.

David became a fixture in the Simmons household, stopping frequently to share a meal or spend a night, as he broke his long trips between his Kalispell home and his residency sites throughout the state.

One night he arrived while no one was home. When the family returned, one son turned to me and said, “Mom, is he going to be our brother?”

Better than that, David. Our friend. Our very good and very dear friend.

With gratitude, affection and appreciation, this book is dedicated to David Long.

Pat Simmons

SORE THUMB

The dust blows in my face,
as I stumble over an empty beer bottle.
I stop and look around
seeing a long empty highway.
I take off my shirt,
trying to keep cool
from the sun's blistering heat.
Hearing the sound of a distant truck,
I stumble back on the highway.
As the truck passes me by,
all I receive is a strong gust of wind,
diesel exhaust in my face.

Jeff Stiffarm
Hays-Lodgepole High
Hays

OLD HOMESTEAD

Old beds on the floor
plaster falling from the ceiling
The windows gone from their frame

Sound is mostly silence
The woodchucks stir
The wind whistles through

Memories, they are warm
It kind of makes you itch
the silence is haunting.

John Nickelson
Park County High
Livingston

MY HORSE CYCLE POEM

My horse is like wind trying to break
out of a snowbank
Wind trying to break out of a snowbank
is like water trying to escape
from a river
Water trying to escape from a river is
like trees shedding leaves in summer
Trees shedding leaves in summer is
like my horse trying to break free

Jolyn Temple
Graff Elementary
Laurel

When my Grandfather died
I felt alone
I could see him in my father's eyes
When my grandmother died
I could see her in my mother's eyes
Then I became alone
As if I too were gone

Charlie Windi Baker
East Glacier Elementary
East Glacier Park

AN OLD COIN

I wish I was a coin
old and rusty.
I'd be more
valuable than gold.
I'd pass through hands
maybe more than once.
But I'm only a child
growing up.

Matt Scheuring,
Huntley Project Elementary
Worden

ODE TO A BIRD

Birds singing
in the
trees like
sounds
of compound
words and
playing
the flute to each
other
Singing by
the waves
of the ocean
I like them
because they're
my last name
Here's their
song—birds fly
birds fly

Quannah Bird
Lockwood Elementary
Billings

ODE TO A SNOWFLAKE

Because you live so short a life
as you gently fall to the ground.
Because as I try to catch you in my
hand, you die.
Because you're as cold as a frost-bit
nose all red and numb from winter.
Because your delicate design is so
precise and unique.
Because as you slowly drift to the
ground, your life slowly ending, I
know that there is always more
of you in a snowfall, waiting
for a chance of recognition.

Leslie Clark
Cardwell Elementary
Cardwell

STONE

1

Dark was the night
As the heart of a stone.

2

Marked stones.
Final destinations
For lost, departed souls.

3

Men of all ages
Bake themselves in sunlight.
Stones cast about carelessly.

4

There are but two
that are coldest:
A night with no moon and a stone.

Cindy Warren
Park High
Livingston

Apple alloy always eat astronauts.
Bob's bib bombed Bill's back.
Charlie's chaplin chopped Cap's cat.
Dean's duck deliriously diluted Dominic's dirty dump.
Egbert egged Elena's ego.
Frank the fibber fibbed fast.
Gabby's gong got Ginny's goat.
Harry hit his happy horse.
Igor is illiterately imbecilic.
Jack Jones gypped Jerry's girlfriend Jill.
Kerry's kitty killed her kit.
Little Lizzy loved little lizards.
Mark moaned miraculously for many minutes.
Nancy's nut nipped Nat's nick.
Orville obliterated Omar's orange.
Pip popped Pappy's pills.
Quack quick quipped quick's quill.
Rob robbed Rick's rattle.
Sally sadly sipped Sam's soda.
Tom Tip tilled trains.
Wally was whacked by a whump.
Xavier x-rayed the xylophone.
Yeller yapped and yelped yuckily.
Zeely zipped up the zany zill.

Damien Seiler
Livingston Middle School
Livingston

ODE TO MY CAR

The door
to its heart
is opened often
by a device
carried
by one.
When open
sunlight opens
its eyes
and sparks
a hidden spark
like dominoes
does it turn
waiting patiently
to leave
with summer
to follow it
and Triumph
like the number
7.

David Stansen
Bozeman High
Bozeman

BLACK PANTHER

If I were a black panther I would
know the secrets of night
and I would eat the shadows of all the
animals in the jungle
and I would like chasing the shadows of
night as the stars danced in the sky.

Erick Smith
Huntley Project Elementary
Worden

THE BALL

I was once
a small ball
Everybody just
tossed me around
Well now I
have gone flat
waiting to be aired up.

Terry Munfrada
Plains Jr. High
Plains

ODE TO THE WIND

I have heard the sound.
The hissing of the wind
against the structures
of the sky.
I have heard the sound
of the wind creeping
through the cracks
of the doors,
and felt it
fall through the
fireplace where
the fire is dead.
I have heard the sound
of the wind rushing
around the corners
of objects in its path.
I have heard the sound.

Michele Reid
Bozeman High
Bozeman

DOCKING LAMBS

it is a hot spring day
The wind is calm except for an occasional breeze
Flowers in bloom reminds you of the county fair
Balloons and colored banners
They make the air smell like fresh honey taffy.
We gather up the lambs and start docking
As I listen to their voices
they sound like little children
calling for their mothers.
I sense they know what is to happen
When the man cuts off the tail
the knife cuts the flesh
You hear him break the bone
it sounds like snapping a brittle twig
Blood squirts up like red lazars
smashing into my face.
The blood burns my eyes like acid
The taste of blood reaches my taste buds
it tastes funny but kind of good
The lamb squirms
I open my eyes
it is crying
I look at the man
he is wearing a demon face
I look at the lamb
It has a child's face
I drop it
I lean against the truck and barf
The sun is hot
The smell of blood is all over
I feel better
I close my mind to the sounds and smells

Wendell Gibby
Sweetgrass High
Big Timber



mike
mahon
Washington
Middle School
Missouri

FIVE WAYS OF LOOKING AT A BLACK HORSE

Its fur is black as a velvet bear
It runs fast as falling rain
Its legs are like crinkled pantyhose
Its nose is soft as a frosted feather sweater
Its mane flows like a leafy waterfall in the wind

2nd Grade Collaborative
Monforton School
Bozeman

BEYOND THE STREAM

a large tree
leaves of green
blowing wild in the wind

an old log
brown and hollow
as still as can be
in the summer breeze

a cluster of grass
yellow and dried
from the heated sun

small stones
gray and damp
from the flowing stream

Chan Nicholes
Duvall Jr. High
Deer Lodge

ANGEL

I took a crayon, writing,
suddenly my feet became rats' claws,
then switched into Glendive, a small Montana town.

Sleeping in the tub,
relaxed in the backyard
I fell into a deep sleep
then a raindrop, crystal clear,
hit my nose.
I stay exactly where I am
by the fresh garden.

Suddenly there was the older woman.
She turned into an angel for me.
Any time I desired an angel
I would call on her.
She would lay beside me on her back
to be tanned while on the grass.
She always be willing and able.

One day she doesn't appear anymore.
A run-down, washed-up youth,
I wake up from my sleep.
But my adolescent body has become mature.
I stand up,
yawning heavily

Keith Erhardt
Dawson County High
Glendive

NUCLEAR WAR

It tastes like rust on an old nail
It feels like you use a power
line for an uneven bar in Gymnastics
It smells like mold growing on a
forgotten loaf of bread.
It looks like the fires of hell flying
toward you.
Sounds like a crackling fire
when it takes off. While in the
air it's like a whistle blowing away
and then it hits . . .
After this there are no sounds no-
where, no birds or blue skies
It just looks like there was
a fire on the bottom of the ocean.

Justin Strub
Washington Middle School
Miles City

THE BATTLEGROUND OF HOME

On the battlegrounds of home
I imagine Mom cursing me in Columbus,
and the yellow toes of Chinks in the bomb shelter at Wildwood,
and a capsized pontoon boat of Nunan Hole—
images of home.

All the lonely heroes are afraid to go
where girls howl like wounded dogs,
crying for affection.

Hereafter,
her babies slowly go home
in the ending of time—
they destroyed their bodies.

Kelly Sullivan
Dawson County High
Glendive

OUR FARM

Out of the way on a dusty road
Old buildings stand up tall
Vehicles are scattered all about.
Nothing is new and very well kept.
Chickens and cats play in the grass.
Up on the porch lie two bales
Upon the bales lies my dog Angel.

Jeff Lincoln
Blue Sky High
Rudyard

FIRST DATE

Just me and him out for the first time,
Alone.
Nothing to talk about,
Silence.
Sweaty hands, long night.
Thank God it's over.

Dani Jo Boehm
Blue Sky High
Rudyard

TO A CHILDHOOD FRIEND

for Dale Maughan

Started by an electric wire foul-up,
the fire blazed.
Captured by the flames that
climbed the ladder
of the black night sky
Struggling to help others out
of the fire, he found himself
caught like a young mountain
lion in a leaf-covered trap.
While he tried to fight
his way out
the sirens whistled
fire trucks raced
police lights flashed.
They didn't make it in time
to save the one
who had helped others out.
Seeing his blue face lying
in the casket,
not even looking like the boy
we'd loved since kindergarten play.

Corena Collins
Ronan High
Ronan

MY FRIEND JAKE

Before he moved away
my old friend Jake
was nice but I was
still only 4 when he
moved. My old friend
Jake was as skinny as
a snake, and was as
light as a rain
drop, but I like him
because he was
nice, he was as tall
as the sky
and that is my old
friend Jake.

Joey Laferriere
Huntley Project Elementary
Worden

HATE

smells like gunpowder
tastes like dirt
sounds like mud
feels like the destruction of a heart

Keenan O'Donnell
Lockwood Elementary
Billings

A ROCK CREEK COVE

Crystal clear blue waters
sparkle in the sun.

Tall green grass waves
with the ripples in the water.

Long dry plant roots reach downward
from the high cliff walls.

Snow white seagulls dot the jagged boulders
that have fallen from the cliffs.

Sandy beaches bake
in the afternoon sun.

Rolling prairie hills
stretch across the land.

Waving prairie grasses
rustle in the wind.

Don Engle
Dawson County High
Glendive

I wish I was a Monkey
small as a hole. So
I can be severe.
And I would
live in a stop light
and look at
cars going by.

Kelly Lafontaine
Lockwood Elementary
Billings

I am a horse with wings
I fly up to the moon and then
to the sun and back home
to the tallest hill or mountain
and then I run across the plains
and inside me I dream that I
flew so high that I couldn't come down.

Jennifer Lynn Reiter
South Elementary
Laurel

MY HAWAIIAN FRIEND

He makes me look as white
as a white crayola color
writing on the sky.
His outgoingness is like a
bird strutting towards another
on a rigid willow tree kids
swing on
When playing football he's like
a tiger running and soaring
across the field or like water
rushing from the tap

Michelle Cline
Bigfork High
Bigfork

Strawberries are the most delicious thing.
Cow breath makes me throw up.
These two are very different.

Mountains make me feel great and breathe easy.
A petroleum factory makes me sick.
These two have nothing in common.

Not all people like strawberries
and not all cows have bad breath.
They have opposite effects.

Some people love petroleum factories.
People are funny—never can agree
on what they like or dislike.

Rob Cosgriff
Big Timber Grade School
Big Timber

HAWK

I wish I was a Hawk that
flew to the moon and then said,
MOOW but how is the moon?
I'd say how to the moon
When I flew to earth I'd see a birth
on earth then I'd fly and look
at myself so I'd see
I looked as good as a cloud

William Bushyhead
Lockwood Elementary
Billings

ODE TO MUSIC

Your transparent grasp
seeks my mind.
My emotions
fall into
your safe
envelope of
motion.
Like an old
favorite glove, you
fit my individual
shape.
Your changing moods
conform to my
never-ending desires.
You are the tunnel
at the end of a light.

Alison Jennings
Bozeman High
Bozeman

THE FRIEND

She smelled like a chalkboard
She had curly hair
She wore glasses that hung down
She wore a flower dress that was too small

She was the one who took me
swimming when I wanted to, but couldn't.
She gave me stuff mom didn't want me
to have. We danced all night like monkeys.
I took a look at the white sheets
that covered her. I cried so hard
when I heard. Her name was
Barbara.

Christy Anne Mohns
Bigfork Elementary
Bigfork

I WISH

I wish
that I was
a great writer
as great as the
ocean
blue in its
slimey rocky bottom.
I wish to have
just a few drops of
knowledge,
a few drops of
know how.
I wish
for a way to
solve problems,
for a way to
prevent wars,
famine,
especially nuclear war.
I wish
to travel
the world,
learn people's
problems
and solve them.
I wish to become what
I am not
to guide the
underestimated
to recognition,
to make
lonely hearts
full
Now I will become

Michelle Wiseman
Monforton School
Bozeman

SAILING IN THE SAN JUAN ISLANDS

Sailing with
parents and sister
is not fun because we're always fighting
So I ignore them.
On a hot, sunny day
I read a book
in the sun
listening to the
seagulls and sea lions
The boat cuts water ripples
like a hot knife through butter
The ferrie's foghorn blasts
and I sit up just in time to see
a killer whale breach
I feel like my brain was erased

Adams B.C.
Bigfork Elementary
Bigfork

MY COUSIN

Like a raccoon
you slide around on the ice
on Cottonwood Creek.
You sing to yourself
When you dance like
Prince you look like
a fish trying to get
out of a net.

Julie Charles
Granville Stuart Elementary
Deer Lodge

A FUNERAL

The flowers are screaming as the insects eat them.
A blade of grass remembers Heaven as it sorrowfully looks at the sky.
The raindrops sing for the girl at her father's funeral.
A fool lives in my tongue, slurring my speech, making me feel the fool.
The coffin groans as it is lowered into the ground.
We are proving the point of darkness.
I travel a million miles, trying to find warmth.
A prayer joins a wing and hope.
Your feelings go deep within your soul when you sleep, haunting you.
It is not possible for the world to make sense.

Scott Christensen
Dawson County High
Glendive

BECKY KNAPP

Being
ever so
cool
knowing I'll be made fun of
yet I still live

Knowing
not
a thing
put in front of me
praying I'll understand someday

Becky Knapp
Granville Stuart Elementary
Deer Lodge

CRAZIES

Crazies are like sticky gum
When they get a shot, they're
like creamy chocolate
They also smell like daisies
they're so refreshing
But every night you can hear
something jumping around, then you
will know that the crazies are
dreaming about real life

Cheryl Little Dog
East Glacier Elementary
East Glacier Park

PEOPLE WALK

People walk
people talk
they
talk
talk
talk and talk
the open mouths
are filled
filled
filling
with beautiful ideas
they are unique ideas
suggesting their friends
their troubles
the ups and downs of living

KOMODO DRAGON

The Komodo Dragon
is like a squashed
skyscraper. It could
run down a deer.
It moves like
a 1922 Buick.
Its skin is
stronger than
steel. It has
teeth sharper
than a scalpel.

Brian Crawford
Plains Jr. High
Plains

They
walk
walk
walk
and at the end of their long journey
with many excursions, wondering
they stop and think of their trek
and love the world
they walk with their companions
they do not wish that they were otherwise
perhaps they know their feet may press
only a few inches at a time,
the earth is a large place
that an eye may see
wherever it may be
the people are alone, of life, of love
In England
Austria
Iceland
here or there
people are the same
they know and know and know
there's ground below
and sky
up high

Jim Zimmer
Dawson County High
Glendive

THE PASSENGER HAS PASSED

I'm not an eagle or a parrot.
I'm not here or anywhere.
I'm a Passenger, the Passenger Pigeon.
My wings were made of gold
and my beak of solid diamond. I live in
outer space in secrecy.

Daniel Burns
West Elementary
Laurel

PASTORAL

As I walked through
the countryside, smelling
the fresh air and touching
weeds, hearing the birds sing
seeing the animals
grazing in the pasture,
I'm wondering why
it is so peaceful and
there is so many things
out here, and they're not
making any noise.

Charlie Martin
Belgrade High
Belgrade

A FEATHER

A feather in the air is like
the lightness of paper
The lightness of paper is like
a drop of water
A drop of water is like a hangnail
falling from your foot
A hangnail from your foot is like
a necklace falling from your neck
A necklace falling from your neck is
like a feather coming off an ostrich
Jenny Masinelli
Cardwell Elementary
Cardwell

Daniel Burns
West Elementary
Laurel

WAR

1

As we look for right and wrong in war
People misunderstand peace
Shattering men of unknown blood,
Looking for ways of destruction
Men & boys fire their guns
Echoing off the clouds of thunder.

2

We hear the Generals voice of thunder
His mind twisted with thoughts of war.
At the crack of dawn we hear their guns
Saluting for war—not peace
Marks they leave of destruction
Walking on fields covered with blood.

3

We can't repay for the loss of blood
From their guns of thunder
Armies move on leaving paths of destruction
Witnesses images of war
Wishing for a world of peace
Time to lay down their guns.

4

Power of peace isn't found in guns
It leaves people in blood
We have to live, to enjoy peace
What's that I hear? Thunder.
We want peace—not war
We're all gonna die of destruction.

5

The world someday will destruct
If we don't put down the guns
Elders die leaving children to face war
We look at sunshine with colors of blood
Shaken away by thunder
Someday we may find peace

6

But until we find peace
War will continue with destruction
Thunder—Thunder—Thunder
Soon children will play with guns
Shooting and spilling blood
Making a game of war

7

Repeat: Peace isn't found with guns
Destruction destroys in images of blood
Thunder, can you hear? It's war.

Jeanie Arlint, Debbie Davis,
Jim Funk, Mike Kelly
Ronan High
Ronan

WINTER

As I sit looking at the daylight
My window fades away
The clouds get gray
When darkness drops
The moon will shine
The wild animals will rise
The sound will stay in my mind

Sherry Ross
East Glacier Elementary
East Glacier Park

Mendocino weather,
gray, caressing cold,
has lost its powers
of revitalization.
green-blue sea caresses the rocks
and cascades down again, relieved.

My eyes, mirroring the weather,
can see you scowling
across the gully
in my direction.
My mind, mirroring my eyes,
is glad you cannot see
me looking back.

Through the foggy weather
which seeps through to my mind,
I feel the tension building,
a moment approaching,
when I, only a B- student,
could solve "the greatest problem of our time"

But the point in time is shattered
the tension built is gone
Now my regret mirrors the color
of the day

Carolyn Leary
Belgrade High
Belgrade

THE BLESSING OF YOUTH

I often wonder
If it wasn't some
sort of blessing in disguise:
my father's stroke
touched us all
and seemed to pull us closer together.
I found out later
that doctors didn't have much hope
and thought he was sure to die.
But only being nine
I didn't understand
the situation.
I had not the slightest idea
what had really happened.
All I knew
was that he could
no longer walk or talk.
But I still loved him
and accepted it with ease.
Maybe that's the blessing

J. J. Carmody
Cardwell Elementary
Cardwell

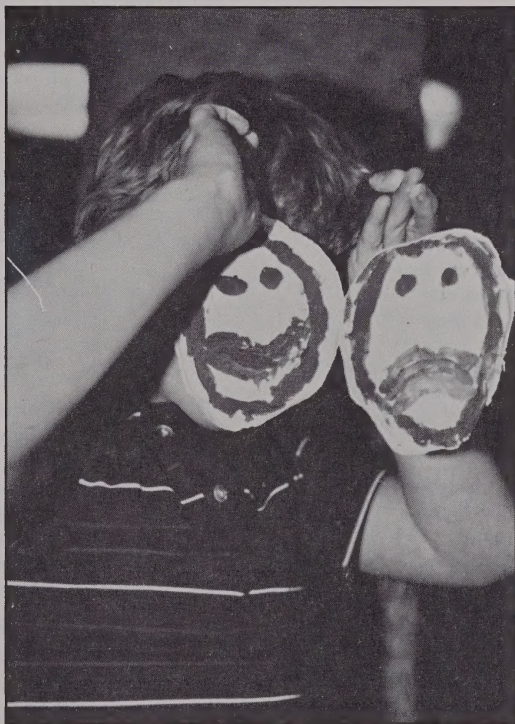
Waves in the ocean are like running through a forest
Running through a forest is like playing a piano
Playing the piano is like looking into a mirror
Looking into a mirror is like walking home on a rainy day
Walking home on a rainy day is like waves in the ocean.

Chris O'Donovan
Ronan High
Ronan

A BIRD

A bird is like a kite in an April breeze
A kite in an April breeze is like a rock skipping across the water.
A rock skipping across the water is like a leaf in a brook.
A leaf in a brook is like smoke.
Smoke is like a bird.

Kevin Goddan
Ronan High School
Ronan



ODE TO LIFE

Like a car
filled with excitement
filled with sorrow
You get pushed around
or
roar with friends
You have all the right
equipment
you just can't show enough
Everyone looks over you
or
you look over them
You have lots of fun
You wish it would last
but then when its over
you're back to sorrow
you sit
you wait
But nothing happens
until somebody wants to
use you.

Mike Szafryk
Plains Jr. High
Plains

THE LIGHTER

I was two
The redness of the car lighter was immense
As my finger moved toward the glow.
the feeling of heat radiated from it.
The flash of pain as my finger touched
The deepness of fire burning
as the skin curled and blackened.

Jerrett Fixmer
Belgrade High School
Belgrade

A CLOCK

Its glass is silent as my sweater
It ticks like this tictoctictoctictoc
Its cord is white as my teeth
Its numbers are as still as my
tongue
Its red hand moves as fast as the
wind
tic toc tic toc tic toc

Darcie Buckmaster
Monforton School
Bozeman

Dead banches are
all over the road.

Big dips and pot holes
with yellow and purple
flowers lining the road.

Creeks and streams
with bridges over them.

Our feet dangling over
with birds singing and
flying overhead.

Lines in and out of
the water, chasing
the fish as they
scatter away.

Charlene Mahseelah
Ronan High School
Ronan

I am the center of the earth
tall enough to call to the spirits,
little enough to know all your secrets.
I live in every man's soul, I wish
to live in the eyes of every living thing.
I have spoken the word of the thunder.
I am in the hearts of all the living.
I will be here always and with me
I bring relief from the burdens on your soul.
I am the sky, I am the earth, I am
the four winds that blow, I am the truth.
My name hurts on the tongues of some men.
I have climbed many generations
and many more to come.
I am the rain that falls softly on the plains,
I am the plains that receive
the life. I am life.
My mission is to free you from all burdens.

Traci LeVay
Poplar High
Poplar

THE WHIRL WIND

When a wind touches you it feels like the
World has moved.
Tastes as if dust is filtered through your mouth.
The sound of whistling through the trees.
Through the cracks of buildings windows,
When a wind is seen twisting in circles.
You can see it as the twisting and turning of a person's life.

Mike Plum
Bigfork High
Bigfork

ODE TO A SNAKE

Your hissing sounds
like a worn-out whistle
in a puddle of water
without color

Your scaly skin
stretched over every
nerve in your body is
like a rubber band
stretched over a mail
box in the summer

Your glistening eyes are
polished with Windex
like rubies that
just saw a ghost

Here is what your
hissing sounds like:
you are ugly
I am knotty
you are ugly
I am knotty

Lance Wood
Granville Stuart Elementary
Deer Lodge

UNTITLED

I hear the weeds, dried and old, crunching beneath
my feet, but I can't feel the stickers.
I see the black smoke billowing into the blue sky
and wonder why.
I feel the warm breeze blow against my face and
I am soothed.
I see wisps of clouds in the sky and I am relaxed
again.
I see people sitting in the shade and suddenly
feel the heat of the sun.
I now feel the cool concrete of the building's
shade and am cooled.
I hear the vent whirring and think nothing of it.
I see the cars passing but ignore them.
I watch a small butterfly flit over the grass and
am amazed.
I see people sitting by the boundary fence lost in
their own thought.
I see the shining silver silos and am intrigued.
I see the telephone poles and lines stretching
across the landscape and wonder why.
I again feel the warmth of the sun and I am relaxed.
I see an insect flying through the grass and I
am curious.
I see the grass, a mixture of dead and alive, and
I wonder about life and death.
I hear the commotion of people talking but I pay
no attention.
I see the circles of people but I don't care.
I ignore someone laughing and just ignore it.
I see two boys returning to the building and think
nothing of it.
I see the vibrant blue watertower against the
duller sky without seeing it at all.
The breeze has become cool as I stand up.

Linda Kent
Havre Junior High
Havre

THE AQUARIUM

The water of blue-green
bubbles

when the orange, blue,
and red

fish dives to the
firery red rocks.

the sea weed waves
back and

forth as if at a
hula dance

and below to the
corner

lurks an ugly gray
cleaner who

works his food
to go on living

Louise Marker
Duvall Jr. High
Deer Lodge

FREE TIME

I wish I was a
stove untouched like a
nest of hornets so
I could have some
time to myself.

Dale Allred
Plains Jr. High
Plains

ODE TO A RECORDER

Your singing sounds like
a fire alarm going off
on a bird house

You look like a giant
toothpick with a piece
of brown paper over it

Holes like a piece of Swiss
Cheese are rolled into
a stick

Here's what your lovesong
sounds like:

not so loud
stupid
not so loud
stupid

Willy Maxwell
Granville Stuart Elementary
Deer Lodge

THE TIGER

As the leaves of the philodendron shade
my back
as my eyes glow like full moons
I walk deadly through the sly jungle
The tall grass slides on my hungry ribs
I come to a cold and refreshing stream
As it approaches my tongue
I inhale the liquid
As my belly gets bigger
I fall over and
sleep.

Tracy Blazo
Graff Elementary
Laurel

THE CALLS OF NATURE

The wind only at a slight breeze

As the tall, green cottonwood trees
extend towards the sky

The small creek with its dirty water
and its steep banks

The schools of visible bullheads swimming in
its mossy waters

The brown gumbo road lying
between the green grass
And the prickly green cactus plants

The quacking of the mud ducks as they
glide along the water

The croaking of the frogs and the chirping of
the birds high up in the trees

The tiny mosquitoes that cause you
to scratch

And nobody there to disturb the essence
of my thinking
Except the slithering green water snake

Darrin Muggli
Dawson County High
Glendive

THE SATURDAY GAME

It was a sunny, hot day—too hot for a game.
The bus ride seemed endless as time.
It was a Saturday game.
You know some players don't like Saturday games
I don't understand why though

Six minutes into the first quarter we had just
scored

As Chris Larson swung his arm I took off
charging downfield in search of my quarry.
I had him in my sights, ready for the kill
I wanted to shoot his helmet off like it was
being shot
from a cannon, as I drive him into the ground

Blindsided—both sides
Pain—tearing and ripping
like old sheets being torn into rags
I am squeezing Chris Larson's hand, trying
not to feel the pain

I'm Ok
I jog off the field—wrap and ice
I'm ready to go back in
I hurry in and plant my foot
It is as if I have no leg, and I am falling
This time I don't come back in
It's not too bad, I keep reassuring myself
Give it a few days—it will be ok
Operation—wheelchair—cast, crutches
I would be happy to play a Saturday game.

Rocco Carroccia
Sweetgrass High
Bigfork

GREED

looks like a molar
being eaten away
by decay

tastes like an
apple that a
worm has already
disposed of

sounds like some's
horrid scream as
they're falling off
the Rimrock

smells like the alcohol
that you put on
the holes in your ears

Amanda Hubber
Lockwood Elementary
Billings

BUTTE

Beautiful as a cheese curd
Under a cloud of dust
The historic uptown makes it look old
The mountains surround the town
like a soup bowl
Everywhere the copper pit glows at
sunset

Dan Pratt
Bozeman High
Bozeman

THE HOUSE

Stop outside a house.
That could be your way.
Let me and you become an eagle
or eat with a lion's claw.
It is sad to be a house.

From the inside the house is a picture:
no one knows how to question it,
yet without it must be hot and noisy,
even though an elephant steps on it full weight,
even though an adult builds it in a lake;
the house floats quickly, sliding up
to the lake shore
where the children come to climb on it
and talk.

I have seen people run in
when six houses are close,
so maybe it is not light outside at all.
Maybe there is a sun glowing
from nowhere as though on top of a cloud—
just enough night to get lost,
the common sayings, the planet signs
on the outer door.

Travis Stimson
Havre Junior High
Havre

The leaves falling from a tree are like feathers in the wind.
A feather in the wind is like a kite on a March day.
A kite on a March day is like Canadian geese flying south for the winter.
Canadian geese flying south for the winter are like car horns.
Car horns are like leaves falling from a tree.

Douglas Barkemeyer
Huntley Project Elementary
Worden

ODE TO A NEWT

You're silent
like a worm
on the sidewalk

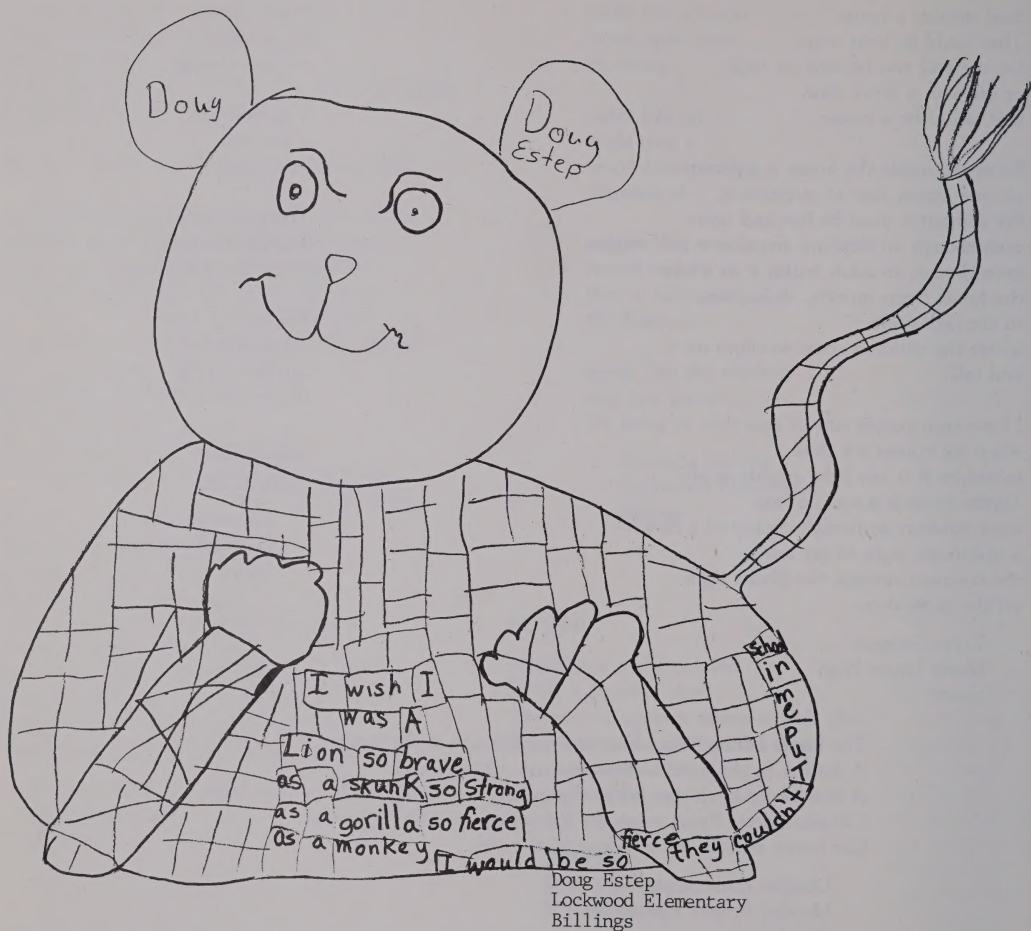
You look like
a wet stick
in a pond

You swim with
a wiggle through
the water at all times

But when I listen,
listen very hard, I
can hear a slight break
in the silence like:

go away
get me out

Praesentia Cliber
Graff Elementary
Laurel



PACIFIC OCEAN

Ocean, violent yet peaceful
seagulls flying overhead looking for a defenseless fish
The sand is warmed by the afternoon sun
The ocean breeze tousles your hair, then laughs
at you when you put it back in order

A sand dollar is washed up on shore
Life once existed here, but now it is washed out
A piece of driftwood, once alive, is rotting on
the beach.
A 'no-littering' sign is sticking out of the sand

I run out towards the water and it begins to
chase me

The foam is trying to drag me under
to a place of no return. The foam looks like
frost, only it is more destructive

The sun beats down on my shoulders, sending
a slightly cool chill down my body.
The ocean so large, so eternal, so everything.

Lisa Mikulecky
Blue Sky High
Rudyard

She's a little deaf
but sharp as a tack.
She's been around a long time
she knows of days of old,
and is smart because of it.
I love that old woman
and as surprising as it may seem,
Even when she's gone,
she'll be here forever.

Jenny Fisher
Plains Jr. High
Plains

MY GRANDMA

She was always with a smoke
She was my favorite
I would stay up with
her for hours

But in the final days
she wouldn't talk
Her room sounded
like birds chirping
Then she left
for good.

Jeff Terry
Bigfork Elementary
Bigfork

POSITIVELY UNSURE

His look is as of a child
Lost in a huge department store.
His destination is just around the corner
But never can be found on a map.
His voice is sure
But he knows he shouldn't have spoken.
He is the Toddler who
Broke the cookie jar.
His innocence is our friendship.

Jim Dockstader
Bigfork High
Bigfork

SITTING ON A HILL ABOVE MY HOUSE

The wind blows through the limbs
of an old pine tree on a hill a little ways away.
Horses graze on the fresh grass
as an eagle flies overhead.
The fence on the horizon goes on forever.
Turning to my left I see my great grandparents' graves.
Every time I look at the graves
the wind stops and there is nothing but silence.
I sit down and look at the ground torn up by machinery.
I look down at my house with all the big trees
my dad planted, the cars my brother wrecked.
I think about all the things I've accomplished
in my life.
Nothing.

Anonymous
Hays-Lodgepole High
Hays

LONELINESS IS:

Your parents are gone
your cat is at the vet
friends are busy
The electricity snaps off
and its dark.
And finally—
when the rain stops.

Laurie King
Bigfork High
Bigfork

ODE TO FREEDOM

People
In the streets
Cheering for freedom
Animals crying for the same

The freedom to speak
The freedom to live
The freedom to eat
Some without freedom

Blacks, Indians,
examples of nonfreedom
You need to be free
to live

Roberta Burbank
Graff Elementary
Laurel



Elizabeth Weber

Courtesy of Paul Chamberlin

BEIRUT

(The Hotellier's Song)

So you bomb my hotel;
I'll build another.

Let the
mirages strafe
Migs scream
Skyhawks drop a rocket.

Cameras watch!
I'll build another.
Out of stucco,
Lots of reinforcing steel,
(The skeleton
In the rubble).

Let the
howitzers thump
rockets launchers sizzle
grenade tubes bump.
Forward observers watch!
I'll build another.
For the Mercedes.
bikinis,
stands for wienies,
trim derriers and some Perriers.

Come - on - in
we've re-opened
in concrete
splashed over
pock marks, acne streets,
Christians, Philangists, Arabs, Jews—
Porter, grab their heavy baggage.
VISA, Mastercard, American Express—
Cashier, come, take them all.

Pete Olson, teacher
Park County High
Livingston

?

(DAD)

he's as big as an ox
with his own world in a box
he's into his garbage business
and into his truck
he's a gentle man with
a short fuse
when I talk to him ever about
Vietnam all I get is silence

Ken Jenson
Bigfork High
Bigfork

THE DAD THAT WASN'T

His glasses looked like two
mirrors reflecting the sun.
His hair
looked like a
bear's.
His skin was rough
his face looked
tough. And his
nose
was crinkled and
wrinkled and
he loved to daytime doze.
He was like Abe Lincoln because he
drove one.
but I never seen his picture.

Jamie Cosens
Granville Stuart Elementary
Deer Lodge

AN ALCOHOLIC

he is awesome at communicating
like a radio that is left on
he can party
like an adult
for days
when it's over
he is hurting
like he is addicted to drugs
his favorite words are
I am getting too old to drink
but he is only seventeen
then he starts again

Sonny Martinez
Ronan High
Ronan

THE CLOSET

it tastes
hollow & bare
like an empty glass of pop
it looks so
big & square
like a building in miniature size
it smells like
dirty socks
from the coats
it sounds so
squeaky & soft
like a mouse snoring
in its sleep
it feels so
rough like sandpaper

Daaron Mills
Granville Stuart Elementary
Deer Lodge

If you were a school
I would walk on you.
And I would make things on you too.
You would teach me a poem of the earth.
I would sing into your heart.

Jodi K. (from "School My Love!")
West Elementary
Laurel

I WISH I COULD FEED THE WORLD

How about an ice cream cone?
How about a steak?
How about a roast?
that's all I ever hear
I wish I could feed
the hungry world
The sad eyes of the children
No where to turn
No where to run
The bones of the starved
Make me feel like dying
Over a million die a year
Over a MILLION!
All night all I hear
is the cry
for help ringing in my ears.
Help! Help! Help me please!
Help Me feed the world.

Buffy Holler
Monforton School
Bozeman

TO THE POETS THAT KNOW IT

Is it true we live in a world
that will help the stricken
and break the sturdy?
Is it true that labor & blood
flow in the same direction?
Is it true when they say
in love & war there are no rules
because if that's true why
hasn't it changed?
Is it true that your life is too
short? Because if that's true
the people I see day by day
are tired & wish it would end.

Craig Clark
Belgrade High
Belgrade

A FRIEND

My friend is like a spirited horse
Her hair is like a waterfall flowing
over a cliff.
And when you look into her eyes
its like looking into a crystal ball filled
with wisdom
When you tell her secrets its like
telling them to a rock knowing
they won't be retold.

Holly Gordon
Bigfork Elementary
Bigfork

I AM

If you were a bike
I would bump into somebody with you.
If you were a fly
I would kill you.
If you were a kite
I would fly you, play with you
and try not to break you.
If you were ice cream
I would eat you.
If you were a pearl
I would wear you.
If you were a bird
I would fly with you.
If you were a heart
I would kiss you.
If you were a pig
I would marry you.
If you were a lion
I would kill you.
If you were like me
I would play with you.
I am a feather floating in the air.

Amy H.
West Elementary
Laurel



Pamela Uschuk

Courtesy of High Country Independent Press

HIS EYES

His eyes are like chips of jade embedded
in a puff of smoke
Chips of jade embedded in a puff of smoke are like
the image of a shallow creek on a sunny day
The image of a shallow creek on a sunny day is like
a mirage seen on the hot Sahara sands
A mirage seen on the hot Sahara sands is like water on glass
Water on glass is his eyes
when I tell him I love him.

Patti Sterrett
Bigfork High
Bigfork

Dead trees are like hands of
old people

Hands of old people are like
a frayed piece of rope

A frayed piece of rope is like
a snake shedding
its skin

A snake shedding its skin
is like dead trees.

Tammy Clute
Duvall Jr. High
Deer Lodge

A wolverine sounds
like a ratchet wrench
He looks like
a fur covered machine

Inside is a Martian
working its computers
He sounds like
he is saying:

Death is at
hand.

Cory Tebay
Cardwell Elementary
Cardwell

Be yourself, we were commanded
But will this ever happen?
We are commanded also
by unwritten rules
of society and each other

What if we don't obey these conformities?
Wierd or strange will be our adjectives
Never courageous or admirable

To be yourself
What does this mean?
To speak or act out of the norm
To cover our feelings seems to be
how the world is
Or is it?

Maureen Gallagher
Ronan High
Ronan

WHEN DAVE DIED

The sun was shining brightly
The golden leaves were glittering
I was in a great mood until I stepped in
the truck
Then Joe dropped the bomb
"Your brother is dead," he says
"You're kidding," was all I said
When Joe didn't answer
I knew it was true
I was silent awhile
But then I got the courage to ask
how it happened.
It was in his truck of course
My mood kept changing from mad
to sad
I didn't cry until I was home
and out of sight
Then I remembered laughing
when I saw the ambulance
I saw his "When I die" shirt
As I folded the laundry
I lost my happiness I had had
when I first saw Jay with Joe

Gayle Tomlinson
Duvall Jr. High
Deer Lodge

THE ROAD RACER

Running effortlessly
He breeze along
Lazy drops of saltwater
Parachute off his sharp nose
The warm air massages his dark skin,
Plays with his curly hair
Small muscular legs carry him on
Running effortlessly

Larry Davis
Belgrade High School
Belgrade

MY HEART

My heart is like a house on fire
A house on fire is like the sun
The sun is like a cold moon
A cold moon is like a dead flower
A dead flower is like my heart

Stassa Bullard
Bigford Elementary
Bigfork

THE FIRST TIME I SAW THE OCEAN

On our way snow was deep like the depth
of the ocean in my mind.
But as we traveled the snow began to
Disappear like a gopher as it runs
to its hole.
Then it was gone and the sun began
to shine like a flashlight in the
dark.
I looked across and all I could see
Was the ocean that looked like
A blue and green field that never
Ended.
Even though it was winter it felt
Like we were on a warm heater.

Dwayne Oliverson
Cardwell Elementary
Cardwell

I wish
I was a millionaire
As rich as fresh
picked coffee beans
I'd buy tons
of bubblegum
and take it in my plane
I'd fly as high
as the moon that scrapes
the sky
and throw that
bubblegum as far
as the nearest star
and bubbles would blow
and stop any war
it would mess up the guns
and clog the jet's engines
and hold the missile
to its launch pad
it would surround the subs
and fall on the ships and
radars would lose their
blips
I wish
I was
a millionaire

Justin Adams
Monforton School
Bozeman

WHERE DOES IT ALL GO?

Where do peoples' feelings go when one's asleep?
Feathers of dead birds, where do they go?
When the water dries, where does it all go?
When beauty is truth, what is sorrow? A lie?
Clouds eat human flesh, but where does it go?
When the wind blows, is it gone for good?
When a man dies, does he ever come back?
When babies are born, do they live for good?
When the sun sets, why does it come back?

Janene Gomke
Havre Junior High
Havre

ODE TO REALITY

Reality is the hurt of a people in transition
It is the wrath of the mind
Reality is what you get when you don't
want it
It's like a light-colored blanket
keeping you protected
but letting you see and be seen.
It is the moral of the universe
It is never sad
it is never happy
It is always you
It conspires in armour
and breeds tiny monsters around you
Reality is what you like to be
To me it is the imagination,
a field of azure
It is the balance of mind and matter
and yet is unbalanced in itself

Mike Smith
Belgrade High
Belgrade

THE BEAVER

You waddle through the woods,
like jello on a plate.
You saw down those trees,
like a chainsaw to a twig.
Those teeth of yours are like an icepick,
to a styrafoam block.
That tail of yours so round.
round like flapjack to a square plate.
When the tail hits the ground
You'd think the Russians were marching in.
The dams you build so warm and cozy.
Like as eskimo's igloo at the North Pole.
Your fur is like a plush carpet.
to a hard oak floor.
So you see you're ahead of us,
What you've been building for ages.
We've only been building for years.

Sarah Chapman
Washington Middle School
Miles City

Kind and
Energetic about some things
Loving and
Living proof of
Yearning for a normal life

Friendly and at
Ease with my friends
Ready to do anything I
Know would be helpful not
Omniscient, a similar
Version of my mother
Insecure and self-
Conscious, at
Heaven with myself

Kelly Ferkovich
Bigfork Elementary
Bigfork

A LION

I wish I was a lion
running wild in the wind
through Africa.
I'd roar my
mightiest roar and it would
ring through the trees which
serve as my home.
On warm days I'd shake
my velvet mane and flowers
would shower to the ground.
At night I'd curl up under
a sweet smelling palm tree
thinking of those other
strange animals I will see.

Sarah Hubber
Lockwood Elementary
Billings

WHEN I WAS BORN

My brothers were busy torturing trusting cats
My parents were chatting over watermelon

The rain finally came to the thirsty crops
Leroy finally figured out his potty chair

The whole world stopped in its tracks

Mary Schaller
Blue Sky High
Rudyard

LAND OF LaLUNA

Why do the stars sparkle?
Why does the sun not revolve around
the Earth?
How were the planets formed?
Ask laluna
Follow me to a distant land,
where laluna lives
Take my hand
and we will cross the sands of time
to find laluna
The journey to laluna
is long,
but short
You must have trust in
me to find the answers to
your questions
When we reach the land
where laluna lives
we will understand everything
So come, come with me to follow
the paths of our imaginations
to the understanding

Amy Rosenleaf
Granville Stuart Elementary
Deer Lodge

A HORSE

If I were a horse I would run across
the field through a pinkish sunset. I'd
feed on the green grass. I would talk
to the birds at night with glittering stars
above. I would run graceful and free.
My mane glistens as I gallop.

Shawna Wheeler
West Elementary
Laurel

SWANS

Swans so feathery
and white
going on your frightening flight

across the seas
across the waters
over hills
under shadows

To get out of cold
from the North
to the South

Then, when winter's over
you make your trip
back again

Bridgit Wilson
Washington Middle School
Miles City

HATE

Hate is the irritation
of mosquitoes buzzing in your ear,
expressed by the quick
sharp slapping of your hand,
the bitter taste of a rotten peanut.
Hate is the sight of a bulldozer
crushing your favorite playhouse,
the cold feeling of a snake when
you are expecting a furry kitten,
and hate is the smell of the
burning meal that you are
preparing for Sunday dinner.

Sharon Efraimson
Bigfork High
Bigfork

BIG LADY

She was old and as humped over as
the day ending
She walked as if her side was
paralyzed
With a stick in her hand that bites
like a snake
Her hair was gray and snarled
like a rat's nest
Her eyes moved like a dead man's
and were black as the night
streets she walked down

Robin Rae Lindburg
Ronan High
Ronan

An outstretched hand is like an empty
basket
An empty basket is like a boy begging
for food
A boy begging for food is like a hole
needing to be filled
A hole needing to be filled is like a
truck waiting for grain
A truck waiting for grain is like an
outstretched hand

Jon Nehring
Bozeman High
Bozeman

Loneliness is like whispering flies
Whispering flies are like soft
music
Soft music is like snow falling
Snow falling is like my boyfriend
running away
When my boyfriend runs away it
makes me lonely

Bev St. Goddard
East Glacier Elementary
East Glacier Park

LOTTIE

Her eyes flash and laugh like police
car lights blinking in the night,
Her face curves into a grind like the
last pumpkin I carved,
She looks at others, her whole body
showing interest, as a mother
chicken does for her chick.
She is as easy to love as a newborn
puppy.
You can go in her words, tales and
stories and ride as a horse in
the meadow.
She's around sixteen and she
is not too pretty, about like
another girl I know,
But she'll never think past six years old,
My friend, Lottie, is retarded,
but I love her as a friend
and as a person.

Joan Bauman
Granville Stuart Elementary
Deer Lodge

PEACE LIKE A WILD CREEK

Peace is like a wild creek splashing among the rocks,
like leaves rustling on a tree in the spring breeze,
like the beaver building his dam,
like a wild horse galloping up the canyon,
like the smell of the air after a rainstorm.
Peace is like a rose opening in the morning sun,
like a deer standing on a hill in the sunset,
like a woodchuck scrambling into his den,
like the daisies covering the hillside,
like the buffalo roaming the prairie of dust.
Peace is like a leaf falling from a branch.
bouncing onto the soft grass.

Karyn Stene
Big Timber Grade School
Big Timber

GRANDPA

I'll never forget him
in anything I do.

A potato bug got me
a penny.

My shoes untied what
should I do.

I sat there waiting
for him to tickle me.

Until, my grandpa
laid down to die.

Jennifer Kelly
Bigfork Elementary
Bigfork

SUNLIGHT ON FROZEN SNOW CYCLE POEM

Sunlight on frozen snow is the icy lies of
light blue eyes
The icy lies of light blue eyes is a waterfall
when the stream wants to freeze
A waterfall when the stream wants to freeze is
a chandelier at dawn
A chandelier at dawn is Mother's white vase
breaking on linoleum
Mother's white vase breaking on linoleum is sunlight
on frozen snow

Lisa Schara
Bozeman High
Bozeman

STARS

1

In the blackness of the night sky,
there shone the twinkling light of a candle flame,
which turned out to be a star.

2

The glowing stars
appeared to be light reflecting off the eyes of a cat
lurking in the shadows.

3

The stars
are but the shining light
of a large city in the sky.

4

The burning stars
were the roaring campfires
of an advancing army.

5

A shining beacon in the heavens,
guiding weary travelers;
there are the stars.

6

The stars in the sky
are but goldfish,
swimming in the cosmic ocean.

Kurt Gardiner
Park County High
Livingston

ODE TO INDIAN DANCING

Because I feel happy as
the full moon
when I'm dancing
Because dancing is what I want
to do for the rest of my life
Because when you are dancing you
get all of the bad things
you did out of you
Because it makes me feel happy
with my tribe and when I am
happy my Grandpa will rest in peace

Lana Lynn Olivas
East Glacier Elementary
East Glacier Park

COME WITH ME INTO THE HEAVENS

Come with me into the heavens
inside the cloud which I found long ago.
With crystals hanging from the ceiling.

Come with me into the heavens
far, far away where people dwell inside
the palace of gold.

Come with me into the heavens
where the land is rolling with frosty
grass and animals of silver

Come with me into the heavens
on the flight of my imagination.

Cami Ross
Granville Stuart Elementary
Deer Lodge

Blue Monday, blue
as a mossy rock
Blue Monday, blue
as a sick eel
Blue Monday, blue
as a math problem
Blue Monday, blue
as my mom yelling at me
Blue Monday, blue
as an alarm clock
Blue Monday, go away
Kaboom, go away to Spain!

3rd/4th Grade Collaborative
Cardwell Elementary
Cardwell

HIS STEP

His step was like thunder in the sky,
like a cat got his tongue,
like he was running in water,
an elephant running for his life.

His step feels like an earthquake,
like a tree tumbling down,
like a thousand dictionaries falling from the sky,
a bus full of forty-five noisy students.

His step sounded like a car squealing its tires,
like a diesel engine starting up,
like a train early in the morning,
a pool full of children.

Trish Pederson
Big Timber Grade School
Big Timber

GRANDPA'S BARN

No one bothered to replace the light bulb
Loft windows as portholes to the East Rosebud breeze
and the sparkling afternoon sunshine
Blends of healthy hay, the pet calf below and the
lingering odor of the skunk who didn't get Grandma's goose.
The milk cow's calf nudges the inner wall,
rubbing and humming a low murmur—
heat waves in the barnyard keeping her inside,
lazy swishes of her tail forever driving off the flies.
The whine of my uncle's lawn mower up at the house
distracts the kittens—but not for long!
They were concerned with new frontiers—
milk pans to trip in, tails to chase,
holes in the floor to avoid, one brief time-out
to scamper to the window ledge.
Persistent barn swallows fluttering above
the heads of the kittens—patting mud into homes,
living against gravity
The steady rattle and popping of the old Ford Tractor
Grandpa's off to check the water
Water to field to bale to loft

Sharon George, teacher
Sweet Grass County High
Big Timber

A PEN

A pen is a man coming back from the war
leaving a bloody trail of ink.
A pen is a chemical plant.
A pen smells as terrible as a clump of ink
that has molded for 200 years.
A pen is as silent as clouds moving through the sky.
A pen feels as smooth as the earth turning.

Wesley Lindeen
Huntley Project Elementary,
Worden

ODE TO A RIVER

you swish like the whole
class shushing you swish
all day

you are as rough
as the ocean you throw
water in and out of your banks

you throw it out
like a fish swishing

swish
swish
swish
swish

Pat Pierce
Granville Stuart Elementary
Deer Lodge

ODE TO MY EYEGLASSES

you click when you
are folded,
just like
a glovebox opening.

you are glass replacements
for my eyes,
like the two great
windows of
a castle.

here is what
your windows tell me:
I can see you
you are mine

Sara Pugh
Graff Elementary
Laurel

TIME

The old withered house can be seen for miles on the lonely flats. It has a sad, grey face, which has no glass in the windows. The front door hangs from one hinge. The dingy, dirty floor creaks as I walk over it. Sunlight streams through in rays and hits the old Majestic stove. There is grass growing through cracks from inside the stove. Tumble weeds and old rusty tin cans are among things of the past. It has an old musty smell which flavors the moment. A piece of a broken mirror reflects past warmth it once had. Driven out by fate of time. A gust of wind came as an owl exited from one window. As it was time for me to do the same.

John Kelly
Sweet Grass County High School
Big Timber

WOLF

A wolf is like a growling
word. A growling word is like sitting
on a stump. Sitting on a stump is
like an old man dying. An old man
dying is like a wolf crying alone
on a mountain ridge

Richard Williams
Lockwood Elementary
Billings

BRICKS

The bricks in the old High School
Are like squares of blood
In the freezing winds of January

Grafitti in the subways of New York
Grafitti on the bricks of the old High School.

The bricks of the old school
Are like the mouth of a mute
Full of stories yet unable to tell.

Like my mind when it is clouded with thoughts
These bricks are half here, half gone.

My guardian angel
They watch over me with a piercing realness

The bricks of the old school
have pity on a man with cancer
For they, too know the end is near.

Jane Esp
Sweet Grass County High
Big Timber

THE POET

Her hair is like springy macaroni
She tells nice stories of her times then
she helps me
with my own
poem of an owl
Her voice is comforting
as she says a poem of
her own
She laughs like my grandmother
And she has eyes that express happiness

Chadon Hazelbaker
Granville Stuart Elementary
Deer Lodge

DEATH

You cannot see death for it is as
black as a raven.
It sounds like the drop of a pin
100 yards away.
It tastes like the sour taste of wine

You cannot feel death because it
is not really there.

It smells like hot fresh tar from the
newly paved street.

Jim Hunter
Washington Middle School
Miles City

WAR POEM

My dad says not to worry
about it because if it happened
we would not live through it.
My mom doesn't say what she thinks.
President Reagan says he is going to
blow up Russia if they try to blow us up.
I think if there was a nuclear war
I would go up into the mountains
instead of going into one of those
protection buildings—if everyone
went in there all the Russians
would have to do is blow up
that one building.

And here I sit and watch
the leaves turn yellow, brown and red
and fall to the ground
as the first snow drop falls down
upon us.

Shawna Wentworth
Livingston Middle School
Livingston

A POEM

Its lines are as different and crooked
as falling snowflakes
Its words sound like chimes from a
grandfather clock
If it smelled it would smell like a purple
breeze
It feels like a soft flowing wave in
the sea
It tastes like a juicy plum in season
It smells musky and full of fun

Anastasia Broyles
Granville Stuart Elementary
Deer Lodge

DEATH

First the loneliness like an echo
through an empty corridor
Missing that smile that reminded
of a ray of sun
through a blustery storm
Then the anger like a howling wind
around a lonely shack
Why did he leave me?
The confusion that sets in like
an unwanted disease
The hurt that seems to tear your
heart apart
The name, "Grandpa," seems familiar
but yet far away
Why did he leave me?

Nicole McLeod
Belgrade High
Belgrade

INSANITY

Insanity is like hearing a cat fight
late late at night.
Or like the sound of gritting fingernails
against a chalkboard
Insanity is watching a nuclear bomb,
the terrible mushroom billowing into
the sky.
Insanity is the constant question, Why?
Or Someone dying, the look in their eyes.

Kim Hancock
Bigfork High
Bigfork

Everyday we wait with the eyes
of an owl
for the next person to be killed,
the next bank to be robbed,
the next fire to be set.
You think you're as precious as gold?
You get your thrills off of hurting
others. Why?
Why? I ask myself.
Why must the moon walk into
the blackening sky?
Why must the water beat
on the rocks?
Why must our treasured life end?
Why must there be crime?

Martha Padgett
Ronan High
Ronan



AN INDIAN PYTHON

you sound like a water faucet
and an air compressor losing air
you look like a cord
with brown and white spots
you squirm like a worm
and curl up like a spring
here is your lovesong

bad snake
bad snake

Jason Dabney
Stuart Granville Elementary
Deer Lodge

SNAKE

You sound like
a sleeper gone
wild

Your tongue looks
like a rope in
an electric socket. Your body
moves like a fire hose

You would go
to Washington D.C.
and hug the President

When you are in
a shower you would
say S-s-s-oap
S-s-s-soap

Scott Sacry
Cardwell Elementary
Cardwell

MY LITTLE BROTHER, CHAD

Chad talks like a speedy motorcycle
Sometimes he's a fight that walks
 Like when he pours Kool-Aid on
 Billy
Sometimes he's a notebook lying
Still on the chair
He looks like a big football
 When he comes in
 Out of the mud
But I like it the best
 When he plays on my wet-banana
Because he looks like an eel
 Terrie Lawrence
 Huntley Project Elementary
 Worden

RUNNING

Because running sounds
 like two jackhammers
 hitting the pavement.
Because the hot sun beats
 down on you like a
 rolled-up newspaper.
 swatting a fly.
Because your mouth feels like
 Death Valley during
 the daytime.
Because your legs feel like
 someone is hammering
 on them with a sledgehammer
Because the sweat from your
 face trickles down
 like a mountain stream
 during Springtime
Because it makes you feel so
 good that you can do
 anything you want to.

Jerry Sakelaris
Washington Middle School
Miles City

GRANDMA

My grandmother's whisper is like
a grenade in a thunderstorm
over a cemetery
Her eyes
are like a leopard's hypnotizing
a rattlesnake in the moonlight
Her walk is like
Frankenstein stepping on a building
in the Universe

Skyler W. Lashley
Granville Stuart Elementary
Deer Lodge

RED LODGE

Carpet of pine needles covers
All but large rocks,

The largest near the campsite is
a small hill for children.

A path like a thread leads
along a creek

The creek is a warped window
looking into another world.

In the distance an ancient beaver dam,
long neglected,

slows the rushing water, but only
for a moment.

Travis McRae
Dawson County High
Glendive

MELANIE'S HAIR RIBBON

It is like you could
see trains roaring through
It is like a train track.

It may be saying
Get me out of this hair
I'm sick of doing work.
It is hard to hold all
this hair in place.

Tied in a bow it sounds
and feels like soft silk.

A question would be what
is inside of such a broad,
pink ribbon
and the answer would
be elephants holding it
up there in place under
silky waterfalls.

Catherine Mason
Bigfork Elementary
Bigfork

THE GREAT RIVER

The great river that flows through
the beautiful meadows giving them
bright green and the flowers of morning
the colors of the day being born.
The great river that flows through
the mountains giving them giant
trees to rule the dwarf-like bushes.
The great rivers that flow through
the animals giving them the ability
to run, to hunt, to bear their babies.
The great river that flows through
our bodies and spirits giving us
love and joy, teaching us to feel and care.
Oh great river, I pray to you
to keep flowing through
our lands and our hearts forever.

Anonymous
Poplar High
Poplar

ODE TO PENCILS

Because your lead-like color recreates
my imagination on white-lined paper.
Because your soft pink eraser hides
my mistakes from all the world.
Because your friend, the pencil sharpener,
grinds your tip to a fine, keen point.
Because you are number one to me,
even if you say you are a number two.
Because your smooth, stream lined, hexagonal shape,
guides my hand across the sheet.
You write all my love notes,
but never breath a word to anyone.

Randy Turnacliff
Bigfork High
Bigfork

THE HEATER

It feels like a wind that came from outer
space

It looks like a tornado that blew
over a windmill

It sounds like a lot of papers blowing
from a fire that has wire in it

It smells like dust that just got swept
It tastes like grease

Jody Smith
Granville Stuart Elementary
Deer Lodge

THE DANCER

Like a Mariposa Lily on a still spring day
Like a white swan on a shimmering prairie pond

No feeling, no cares
Standing free, standing proud
She prances with the clouds,
goes on and on like the prairie

Heather Stewart
East Glacier Elementary
East Glacier Park

THREE DEAD

My grandpa died February, two weeks
After his birthday

In the coffin he looked like
A Zombie about to awake

Three months later my uncle died
The funeral looked like thousands
of mice, quiet and peaceful

Three months later, Peanut, our dog
Died like a once every three
Months murder

Tim McShane
Washington Middle School
Miles City

HYENA CYCLE POEM

A hyena is like a laughing statue
A laughing statue is like sizzling bacon
Sizzling bacon is like popcorn popping
at the movies

Popcorn popping at the movies is like me
teasing my friends

Me teasing my friends is like a hyena
laughing at a camel

Andrea Shockley
Monforton School
Bozeman

THE BEACH

While laying on the hot, soft white
sand, I hear the seagulls cry like they are in agony
the high rushing waves tumble onto
the beach as if to get away,
but soon are sucked back
into the cold dark sea.

Sea anemones strive for life,
as they wait for the tide to come back in.
The crashing waves give off
a high mist when they pound down
on what seems to be a helpless little rock.
Walking through the waves
the sand beneath my feet
crumbles away.

Carin Baer
Bigfork Elementary
Bigfork

A nose is like jumping off of a diving board
A diving board is like an airplane
An airplane is like a bird
A bird is like me

I
fly
high

Kelly George
Bigfork Elementary
Bigfork

RONNIE AND HIS VETTE

The old politician,
Ronnie was his name,
Driving a Corvette,
speeding as he came.
The American Flag
Jamming out above his name
The car's candy paint
shone with a red flame.
The back seat filled,
Instant potatoes was his game.
My incredible dream ended
with Punk Rockers fame.
You speak my language
Their songs are all the same!

Shane Heintz
Belgrade High

Falling rain is like washing dirty clothes
Washing dirty clothes is like taking out the garbage
Taking out the garbage is like paying a penance
Paying a penance is like falling rain.

Anonymous
Poplar High
Poplar

MY BROTHER

If I were to see
him in the sky
I'd know right away
that it would be him.
The smile on his face
the twinkle in his eye
If I felt his arms around me
I'd know it would be him
because his hands were so soft and smooth.
If I heard his voice coming from the wind
I'd know the words would flow through me
like the blood inside of me.

Chantel King
Mays-Lodgepole High
Mays

GREAT GRANDMOTHER

Her eyes forever sparkled like bright emeralds,
But shining, her soul ached
Though we were with her, she was alone.

Her husband's death stole her youth,
the yesteryears gone except memories
Of the man and she on the Harley Davison
blowing like leaves down a deserted street.

Her life bred sadness, unjustly . . .
she deserved the better, but got the worse.
Blackness took the one she cherished
but light reunited them.

Erin Hubbard
Bigfork High
Bigfork

Earrings are like water drops hanging from a
cave
Water drops hanging from a cave are like a
new born baby crying
A new born baby crying is like the end of
a heavy rain
The end of a heavy rain is like crystals hang-
ing from a lamp
Crystals hanging from a lamp are like earrings.

Randy McNair
Ronan High
Ronan

SEASON OF TEACHER

The winter teacher is
strict, hitting kids with
her long wooden ruler.

The spring teacher is
frustrated and fed up
with her innocent sweet students.

The summer teacher is itching
to see her new students, eager to go back
to school driving her husband crazy.

The nervous sweet fall teacher
is ready to lock a ball and chain
around her students' ankles.

Andy Goff
Livingston Middle School
Livingston

If you were a horse
I would ride you in the wind.
If you were a flower growing in a field
I would smell you.
If you were a butterfly
I would chase you and catch you
and then let you go and chase you again.
If you were a fawn
I would find you in the woods and pet you.
If you were a four-leaf clover
I would wish on you and keep you.
If I were you
and you were me
we would be in love.

Angie
West Elementary
Laurel

GRANDMOTHER

I could see her image
in the form of a cloud.

I could hear her voice whispering
in the smooth passing wind.

The smell of her perfume
is like roses all around me

When I think of her
I feel we are miles apart.

Everytime I move closer to her
she gets farther and farther away.

Karen Bradley
Hays-Lodgepole High
Hays

A blind politician jamming
Golden Eagles and American flags down
his soft hungry throat spitting
out curving languages at the moon.
While coyotes howl in protest til a
speeding Corvette going on and on
smashes the dream like potatoes.

Wendy Townsend
Bigfork High
Bigfork

HAYLOFT OF THE LITTLE RED BARN

Short crawl up the creaky ladder
with one rung missing
to witness a mother
cat
caressing baby
where they sit together on one of the
rough gold strawbales
that make the air smell
like a dusty oatfield.
jump up on the rough
wooden
straw-strewn floor boards
to one of the small
square windows
that let in less light
than the holey roof
to watch the slow confusion of
the barnyard below.

Ronya Kuntz
Dawson County High
Glendive

MY GRANDMOTHER

I could see her welcoming smile from miles away
waiting patiently for someone to join her.
Her rocker sits in the old shack just swaying;
The old Indian songs she sang to me still remain;
Sometimes I can still feel her presence within me;
When I smell the scent of a fresh rain.
Her hair was like the soft white clouds blowing in the wind.
The features of her face were like the four seasons
Waiting to bloom into new visions.

Vivian Werk
Hays-Lodgepole High
Hays

COUSIN

Tall, dark and handsome,
The epitome of any girl's dream

Laughing in the sunshine,
Listening to other's voices during rain

Drowned in Costa Rica
Memories of him rise like ocean waves

Gayle Zeller
Bigfork High
Bigfork

THE CLOUD

The blue clear sky
Only the cloud makes a pattern.

The shadow creeps along
Pulling the cloud behind.

At times the cloud is gray and dark,
Like my grandpa's hair
Although it is soft.

Throwing light and making sound
The cloud can be deadly.

Screaming across the sky
While floating on the wind.

Ty Kuehn
Dawson County High School
Glendive

MY GHETTO BLASTER

My ghetto blaster's wires are like electric
spaghetti
electric spaghetti sounds like static rock
music
static rock music is loud as a lion roaring
with rocks in his mouth
a lion roaring with rocks in his mouth is like
a cyclone
a cyclone whirls fast as a tape in a ghetto
blaster

Jason Tavenner
Granville Stuart Elementary
Deer Lodge

MY GRANDPA

My grandpa sits all day and
daydreams. I go by him and
wave my hands in front of
him and say "Grandpa, Grandpa"
he ignores me. I don't know why
he just does. He wears old patched
pants and a green shirt. But he
is wonderful to me because
he does alot with me. He comes
to grandparents day with me
when he is not sitting in his chair.

Ron Wetch
West Elementary
Laurel

The clock on the wall is like a ticking
time bomb
A ticking time bomb is like a race
A race is like the courage to win
The courage to win is strong as time on a clock

Nathan Huschka
Graff Elementary
Laurel

CORN

Corn is like a yellow flower
A yellow flower is like the sun
The sun is like gold
Gold is like the light of a house in the night
A house in the night is like yellow corn.

Troy Owen,
Poplar High
Poplar

DOLPHIN

In my shows I bob
thru the hoops and flip in the
water. I try to show-off
in front of all the people. When I am
swimming I feel like a poet
hidden in the waves. Yet if I
could see my shadow in the sea
Inside my heart I know
I am free but my friends make me
feel lonely and weak.

Traci Moran
West Elementary
Laurel

BIRTHDAY

Everybody was planning New Year's parties
when I was born.

Snow covered branches
Icicles dripped from the gutters
All the people curled up in front
of their fireplaces and wondered
how they were going to get the
Christmas tree needles out of
the carpet.

Dec. 30, 1966
Desiree Sallee
Blue Sky High
Rudyard

DREAMS

In the British Airways Smoking section
I think of poets hard at work in Glendive
and nimble fingers of musicians in the back room
at Buttreys
and the frustrated would-be pilot of Haagenstons
Hardware
thinking of yesterday.

All their great drums are never to be realized.
Their subjects elude like skilled criminals
running for freedom.

So,
their dreams go far away
in their infancy of adulthood
and run quickly from their outstretched arms.

Brian Keys
Dawson County High
Glendive

RUNNING THE MILE

Running the mile is like being hunted
Being hunted is like running for your life
Running for your life is like pushing yourself
Pushing yourself is like being away from your body
Being away from your body is like running the mile.

Kevin Luse & Charles Swanson
Poplar High
Poplar

GOODBYE

It is a windy day in May
Relatives and friends surround the casket
People crying, others more surprised
People telling me to be strong
One by one we go throw dirt in the hole
Slowly the flowers disappear into the ground
I stand there and remember
all the memories of him
The tears fall down my face
as I say good-bye for the last time

Carol Longknife
Hays-Lodgepole High
Hays

MY GREAT GRANDMOTHER

When I remember my Grandma
she has hair like a cloud. She is as
small as a mouse. She was fun
to travel with but she died
of laughter

John Snell
Granville Stuart Elementary
Deer Lodge

STAR CYCLE POEM

A star is like a sunbeam in a mailbox
A sunbeam in a mailbox is like a diamond
in a raindrop
A diamond in a raindrop is like ice
in a rainbow
Ice in a rainbow is like a star

Ramie Lee Maulding
Monforton School
Bozeman

Worn with the prestige of a soldier's uniform that
Always shines with the glitter of a moonlit lake
Ticking, always on time, to
Chase the fun away, but loyal to have me at
Home by curfew

Shawna K. Murphy
Bozeman High
Bozeman

A map is like a hidden fortress
A hidden fortress is like a definition in a dic-
tionary
A definition in a dictionary is like the moon be-
hind clouds
A moon behind clouds is like a brain in a skull
A brain in a skull is like a map.

Scott Denham
Bigfork Elementary
Bigfork

HE

He's quiet as the wind
And as loud as thunder
Always surprising me with
The things he says
Smiling all the time
Hiding his thoughts behind
Deep blue eyes as blue
as the ocean
But when you get to know
him, all the water flows out

Anonymous
Ronan High
Ronan

ODE TO THE GREASERS

Black leather jackets and engineer
boots,
Tight levis and a hot Chevy
Under the hot lights at the Park
Drive-Inn.
Brenda and Eddie, the popular steady
Drivin' with the top down in a
new Chevy
The radio blarin'
What a wonderful time.
Come back again.
The music, the cars,
The drags, and the fights
I love those hot teen-age nights!

Bill Emerson
Plains Jr. High
Plains

ODE TO THE FULL MOON

Because it makes my face glow
like a halo
Because it makes me think of
you
Because it makes me see what
I am
Because I see what the world
is like
Because its so beautiful like
a pink daisy
Because I can see my dreams
Because you can see butterflies
fly in it
Because you can see animals
cry
I would go and jump for joy &
see my future

Cheryl Little Dog
East Glacier Elementary
East Glacier Park

INDEX OF CONTRIBUTORS

Allred, Dale.....	Plains Jr. High, Plains.....	24
Adams, Justin.....	Monforton School, Bozeman.....	39
Angie.....	West Elementary, Laurel.....	56
Anon.....	Ronan High, Ronan.....	61
Anonymous.....	Hays-Lodgepole High, Hays.....	30
Anonymous.....	Poplar High, Poplar.....	52
Anonymous.....	Poplar High, Poplar.....	54
Arlint, Jeanine.....	Ronan High, Ronan.....	19
B.C., Adam.....	Bigfork Elementary, Bigfork.....	15
Baer, Carin.....	Bigfork Elementary, Bigfork.....	54
Baker, Charlie Windi.....	East Glacier Elementary, East Glacier Park.....	5
Barkmeyer, Douglas.....	Huntley Project Elementary, Worden.....	27
Bauman, Joan.....	Granville Stuart Elementary, Deer Lodge.....	42
Bird, Quannah.....	Lockwood Elementary, Billings.....	6
Blackwood, Linda.....	Park High, Livingston.....	33
Blazo, Tracy.....	Graff Elementary, Laurel.....	25
Boehm, Dani Jo.....	Blue Sky High, Rudyard.....	12
Bradley, Karen.....	Hays-Lodgepole High, Hays.....	56
Broyles, Anastasia.....	Granville Stuart Elementary, Deer Lodge.....	49
Bullard, Stassa.....	Bigfork Elementary, Bigfork.....	38
Burbank, Roberta.....	Graff Elementary, Laurel.....	30
Carmody, J.J.....	Cardwell Elementary, Cardwell.....	20
Carroccia, Rocco.....	Sweetgrass High, Big Timber.....	26
Chapman, Sarah.....	Washington Middle School, Miles City.....	40
Charles, Julie.....	Granville Stuart Elementary, Deer Lodge.....	15
Christensen, Scott.....	Dawson County High, Glendive.....	16
Clark, Craig.....	Belgrade High, Belgrade.....	35
Clark, Leslie.....	Cardwell Elementary, Cardwell.....	6
Cliber, Praesentia.....	Graff Elementary, Laurel.....	27
Cline, Michelle.....	Bigfork High, Bigfork.....	13
Clute, Tammi.....	Duvall Jr. High, Deer Lodge.....	37
Collins, Corena.....	Ronan High, Ronan.....	12
Cosens, Jamie.....	Granville Stuart Elementary, Deer Lodge.....	32
Cosgriff, Rob.....	Big Timber Grade School, Big Timber.....	14
Crawford, Brian.....	Plains Jr. High, Plains.....	17
Dabney, Jason.....	Granville Stuart Elementary, Deer Lodge.....	50
Davis, Debbie.....	Ronan High, Ronan.....	19
Davis, Larry.....	Belgrade High, Belgrade.....	38
Denham, Scott.....	Bigfork Elementary, Bigfork.....	61

Dockstader, Jim	Bigfork High, Bigfork	29
Efrainson, Sharon	Bigfork High, Bigfork	41
Engle, Don	Dawson County High, Glendive	13
Emerson, Bill	Plains Jr. High, Plains	62
Erhardt, Keith	Dawson County High, Glendive	10
Esp, Jane	Sweet Grass County High, Big Timber	48
Estep, Doug	Lockwood Elementary, Billings	28
Ferkovick, Kelly	Bigfork Elementary, Bigfork	40
Fixmer, Jerrett	Belgrade High, Belgrade	22
Funk, Jim	Ronan High, Ronan	19
Gallagher, Maureen	Ronan High, Ronan	37
Gardiner, Kurt	Park County High, Livingston	44
George, Kelly	Bigfork Elementary, Bigfork	54
George, Sharon	Sweet Grass County High, Big Timber	46
Gibby, Wendell	Sweet Grass County High, Big Timber	8
Goff, Andy	Livingston Middle School, Livingston	55
Gomke, Janene	Havre Jr. High, Havre	39
Gordon, Molly	Bigfork Elementary, Bigfork	35
Hancock, Kim	Bigfork High, Bigfork	49
Hazelbaker, Chadron	Granville Stuart Elementary, Deer Lodge	48
H. Amy	West Elementary, Laurel	35
Heintz, Shane	Belgrade High, Belgrade	54
Holler, Buffy	Monforton School, Bozeman	34
Hubbard, Erin	Bigfork High, Bigfork	55
Hubber, Amanda	Lockwood Elementary, Billings	26
Hubber, Sarah	Lockwood Elementary, Billings	40
Hunter, Jim	Washington Middle School, Miles City	48
Huschka, Nathan	Graff Elementary, Laurel	58
Jennings, Alison	Bozeman High, Bozeman	14
Jenson, Ken	Bigfork High, Bigfork	32
K., Jodi	West Elementary, Laurel	34
Kelly, Jennifer	Bigfork Elementary, Bigfork	43
Kelly, John	Sweet Grass County High, Big Timber	47
Kelly, Mike	Ronan High, Ronan	19
Kent, Linda	Havre Jr. High, Havre	24
Keys, Brian	Dawson County High, Glendive	59
King, Chantel	Hays-Lodgepole High, Hays	55
King, Laurie	Bigfork High, Bigfork	30
Knapp, Becky	Granville Stuart Elementary, Deer Lodge	16
Kuehn, Ty	Dawson County High, Glendive	57

Kuntz, Ronya	Dawson County High, ...	56
Laferriere, Joey	Huntley Project Elementary, Worden	12
Leary, Carolyn	Belgrade High, Belgrade	20
LeVay, Traci	Poplar High, Poplar	23
Lincoln, Jeff	Blue Sky High, Rudyard	11
Lindburg, Robin Rae	Ronan High, Ronan	42
Lindeen, Wesley	Huntley Project Elementary, Worden	46
Little Dog, Cheryl	East Glacier Elementary, East Glacier Park	16, 62
Long Knife, Carol	Hays-Lodgepole High, Hays	60
Luse, Kevin	Poplar High, Poplar	60
Mahon, Mike	Washington Middle School, Miles City	9
Mahseelah, Charlene	Ronan High, Ronan	22
Marker, Louise	Duvall Jr. High, Deer Lodge	24
Martin, Charlie	Belgrade High, Belgrade	18
Martinez, Sonny	Ronan High, Ronan	34
Masinelli, Jenny	Cardwell Elementary, Cardwell	18
Mason, Catherine	Bigfork Elementary, Bigfork	52
Maulding, Ramie Lee	Monforton School, Bozeman	61
Maxwell, Willy	Granville Stuart Elementary, Deer Lodge	25
McLeod, Nicole	Belgrade High, Belgrade	49
McNair, Randy	Ronan High, Ronan	55
McRae, Travis	Dawson County High, Glendive	51
McShane, Tim	Washington Middle School, Miles City	53
Mikulecky, Lisa	Blue Sky High, Rudyard	29
Mills, Daaron	Granville Stuart Elementary, Deer Lodge	34
Mohrs, Christy Anne	Bigfork Elementary, Bigfork	14
Moran, Tracy	West Elementary, Laurel	59
Munfrada, Terry	Plains Jr. High, Plains	8
Murphy, Shawna K	Bozeman High, Bozeman	61
Muggli, Darrin	Dawson County High, Glendive	25
Nehring, Jon	Bozeman High, Bozeman	42
Nicholes, Chan	Duvall Jr. High, Deer Lodge	10
Nickelson, John	Park County High, Livingston	5
O'Donnell, Keenan	Lockwood Elementary, Billings	12
O'Donovan, Chris	Ronan High, Ronan	20
Olivas, Lana Lynn	East Glacier Elementary, East Glacier Park	44
Oliverson, Dwayne	Cardwell Elementary, Cardwell	38
Olson, Pete	Park County High, Livingston	32
Owen, Troy	Poplar High, Poplar	58
Padgett, Martha	Ronan High, Ronan	49

Pederson, Trish.....	Big Timber Grade School, Big Timber	45
Pierce, Pat	Granville Stuart Elementary, Deer Lodge.....	47
Plum, Mike.....	Bigfork High, Bigfork	23
Pratt, Dan	Bozeman High, Bozeman	26
Pugh, Sara.....	Graff Elementary, Laurel	47
Reid, Michele	Bozeman High, Bozeman	8
Reiter, Jennifer Lynn	South Elementary, Laurel.....	13
Rosenleaf, Amy	Granville Stuart Elementary, Deer Lodge.....	41
Ross, Cami.....	Granville Stuart Elementary, Deer Lodge.....	45
Ross, Sherry	East Glacier Elementary, East Glacier Park	19
Sacry, Scott.....	Cardwell Elementary School, Cardwell.....	50
St. Goddard, Bev	East Glacier Elementary School, East Glacier Park.....	42
Sakelaris, Jerry.....	Washington Middle School, Miles City	52
Salle, Desiree.....	Blue Sky High School, Rudyard.....	59
Schara, Lisa.....	Bozeman High School, Bozeman	43
Scheuring, Matt.....	Huntley Project Elementary School, Worden.....	6
Seiler, Damien	Livingston Middle School, Livingston	7
Shockley, Andrea	Monforton School, Bozeman	53
Smith, Erick	Huntley Project Elementary School, Worden.....	7
Smith, Jody	Granville Stuart Elementary School, Deer Lodge	53
Smith, Mike	Belgrade High School, Belgrade.....	39
Snell, John	Granville Stuart Elementary School, Deer Lodge	60
Stansen, David	Bozeman High School, Bozeman	7
Stene, Karyn	Big Timber Grade School, Big Timber	43
Sterrett, Patti.....	Bigfork High School, Bigfork	37
Stewart, Heather	East Glacier Elementary School, East Glacier Park.....	53
Stiffarm, Jeff	Hays-Lodgepole High School, Hays	5
Stimson, Travis	Havre Jr. High School, Havre	27
Strub, Justin.....	Washington Middle School, Miles City	11
Sullivan, Kelly	Dawson County High School, Glendive.....	11
Swanson, Charles	Poplar High School, Poplar	60
Szafryk, Mike	Plains Jr. High, Plains.....	22
Tavener, Jason.....	Granville Stuart Elementary School, Deer Lodge	58
Tebay, Cory	Cardwell Elementary School, Cardwell.....	37
Temple, Jolyn.....	Graff Elementary School, Laurel	5
Terry, Jeff.....	Bigfork Elementary School, Bigfork	29
Tomlinson, Gayle.....	Duvall Jr. High School, Deer Lodge.....	38
Townsend, Wendy.....	Bigfork High School, Bigfork	56
Turnacli, Randy	Bigfork High School, Bigfork.....	52
Wagner, Tim	Graff Elementary, Laurel.....	Back Cover

Warren, Cindy	Park County High School, Livingston.....	6
Wentworth, Shawna.....	Livingston Middle School, Livingston	48
Werk, Vivian.....	Hays-Lodgepole High School, Hays	57
Wetch, Ron.....	West Elementary School, Laurel.....	58
Wheeler, Shawna.....	West Elementary School, Laurel.....	41
Williams, Richard	Lockwood Elementary School, Bozeman.....	47
Wilson, Bridgit	Washington Middle School, Miles City	41
Wiseman, Michelle	Monforton School, Bozeman	15
Wood, Lance.....	Granville Stuart Elementary School, Deer Lodge	23
Zeller, Gayle.....	Bigfork High School, Bigfork.....	57
Zimmer, Jim	Dawson County High School, Glendive.....	17

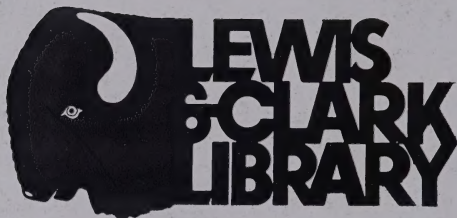
INDEX OF PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS

Belgrade High School, Belgrade.....	18, 20, 22, 35, 38, 39, 49, 54
Big Timber Grade School, Big Timber	14, 43, 45
Bigfork Elementary School, Bigfork.....	14, 15, 29, 35, 38, 40, 43, 52, 54, 41
Bigfork High School, Bigfork.....	13, 23, 29, 30, 32, 37, 41, 49, 52, 55, 56, 57
Blue Sky High School, Rudyard	11, 12, 29, 40, 59
Bozeman High School, Bozeman.....	8, 14, 26, 42, 43, 41
Cardwell Elementary School, Cardwell	6, 18, 20, 37, 38, 45, 50
Dawson County High School, Glendive	10, 11, 13, 16, 17, 25, 51, 56, 57, 59
Duvall Jr. High School, Deer Lodge	10, 24, 37, 38
East Glacier Elementary School, East Glacier Park	5, 16, 19, 42, 44, 62
Graff Elementary School, Laurel	4, 5, 27, 30, 47, 58
Granville Stuart Elementary, Deer Lodge	15, 16, 23, 25, 32, 34, 41, 42, 45, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 58, 60
Havre Jr. High, Havre	24, 27, 39
Hays-Lodgepole High, Hays	5, 30, 55, 56, 57
Huntley Project Elementary, Worden.....	6, 12, 27, 46, 51
Livingston Middle School, Livingston	7, 48, 55
Lockwood Elementary, Billings.....	6, 12, 13, 14, 26, 28, 40, 47
Monforton School, Bozeman.....	10, 15, 22, 34, 39, 61
Park County High School, Livingston.....	5, 6, 32, 33, 44
Plains Jr. High, Plains	8, 16, 22, 24, 29, 62
Poplar High, Poplar	23, 52, 54, 58, 60
Ronan High School, Ronan.....	12, 19, 20, 21, 22, 34, 37, 49, 55, 41
South Elementary, Laurel	4, 13
Sweet Grass County High, Big Timber.....	8, 26, 46, 47, 48
Washington Middle School, Miles City.....	11, 40, 41, 48, 51

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nts, teachers, parents, administrators and legislators who
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THE WINDOW CYCLE POEM

A window is like the sun
reflecting on a tin can
A tin can is like a fish eye
glowing in the sunlight
A fish eye glowing in the sunlight
is like a horse's hooves pounding on the ground
A horse's hooves pounding on the ground are like
a hub cap rolling down the road
A hub cap rolling down the road
is like a skyscraper's window shining

Tim Wagner
Graff Elementary



Kathy Gaye Shiroki

Photo by Jim Anderson